In Memoriam
Donald F. Carmony, 1910-2005

In recent months, Indiana historians lost two legendary teachers and scholars. Thomas D. Clark, a member of the Indiana University history faculty from 1968 to 1973 and author of the four-volume *Indiana University: Midwestern Pioneer* (1970-77) died on June 28, 2005, in Lexington, Kentucky, at the age of 101. Over the course of seventy-five years, Clark wrote or edited three dozen books on southern, western, frontier, and state history. He taught at the University of Kentucky from 1931 to 1968, and was Kentucky's Historian Laureate from 1990 until 2005. His influence guided the Organization of American Historians to establish their headquarters in Bloomington, Indiana.

Donald F. Carmony, a member of the Indiana University history faculty and editor of the *Indiana Magazine of History* from 1955 to 1975, died on February 14, 2005, in Bloomington, at the age of 95. The following testimonials to Carmony's life and legacy are drawn from the talks delivered at a memorial service in his honor, which was held in Bloomington on April 30.

James H. Madison is the Thomas and Kathryn Miller professor of history at Indiana University, Bloomington, and served as editor of the *IMH* from 1976 to 1993. John Worth is a Rushville attorney and former student of Don Carmony. Stephen C. Moberly was a history major at Indiana University and former student of Don Carmony. Eric Sandweiss is the editor of the *IMH* and the first holder of the Carmony Chair of History at IU.
"MR. INDIANA HISTORY"
By James H. Madison

A line from Arthur Franklin Mapes's "Indiana" is my starting point.

"I must learn more of my homeland
For it's paradise to me"

No one "learned more" of his Indiana homeland than Donald F. Carmony. His knowledge of the state, particularly of its pioneer history, was unsurpassed.

Part of Carmony's learning was luck, the good fortune of studying under such inspiring scholars and teachers as IU History Professors Logan...
Esarey and R. C. Buley. Don's gratitude and respect for them often showed up in the form of a story, a story enhanced by the unique cadence and accent of his voice, the small grin on his face, the glow that such mentors evoked for him.

I liked hearing Don tell stories about Esarey and Buley because I eventually understood that he was telling me that he stood in a line of historians. I came to hope that I would stand in that line alongside others of my generation, and that it would move forward for historians in generations to come.

Part of Don's learning about his homeland came, too, from his growing up. His Shelby County origins and his professors were essential elements in making him "Mr. Indiana History.”

But not sufficient.

For the key source, we must try to imagine his immense labor—across months, years, and decades—in the primary sources of Indiana's history. Don Carmony probably read more Indiana antebellum newspapers, more documents and reports from the General Assembly, more of those sources that are the life blood of the scholar of early Indiana history, than any other human being. His hard work led to an intimidating command of his subject.

And yet Carmony's historical authority never turned to arrogance or mean-spiritedness. He remained a scholar and a gentleman. When I assumed the position of editor of the Indiana Magazine of History in 1976, I knew far less than I should have known. Don might have pointed that out. Yet the only advice he gave me about the IMH was that he thought it would be a good idea to keep Lorna Lutes Sylvester as associate editor. Don not only allowed but encouraged me to grow in the job, never suggesting that I needed to do it as he did it. He was gifted with the unusual combination of deep knowledge and a willingness to allow others to make their own way.

Let me return to the second line I quoted from the state poem: "For it's paradise to me.”

Don loved this state. One of the little treasures he gave me was a state highway map published in 1941. It reminds me of the thousands of miles of Indiana that he traveled—speaking, consulting, doing research. He was a public historian long before such a label existed.

Yet Don's love of Indiana did not mean he was happy with everything he saw here. He thought the state's schools should be better. And he thought that there was more room in Indiana for American ideals of justice and humanity. I was reminded of this commitment to social justice while pursuing my own research several years ago, when I came across the program of the Indiana NAACP meeting in French Lick in 1930. There I found the name Donald Carmony, speaking on the subject "If I Were a Negro.” I called him and asked if he was that Donald Carmony. Yes, he said, he was that Carmony; and he was the only white person on the program. I don't need to emphasize how progressive and risky a move this was in 1930 Indiana.
In the spirit of Mapes's poem, Donald Carmony learned about his homeland and he loved it, as well. His learning and his love encompassed pioneer Indiana and reached from his teachers to his students and colleagues and to those historians still to come—historians who will know they follow in Donald F. Carmony's footsteps, in his line of descent.

TEACHER
By John Worth

Donald Carmony sought to instill in his students an understanding that history, at its core, is told through primary sources. Secondary sources, by contrast, contextualize primary-source material by contributing an additional layer of interpretive insight. As a student of Professor Carmony, I cannot resist allowing my former teacher's own words—the preface to his last book, *The Pioneer Era* (1998)—to serve as the primary-source material for my remarks.

Carmony notes in that essay that "I began teaching Indiana history while on the faculty of Indiana Central College (today's University of Indianapolis), but the transfer to Indiana University gave me much more time for its study and teaching." Without leaving behind his position at Indiana Central, Don began his graduate work with a temporary residency in Bloomington during the academic year of 1932-33. In 1938, when Indiana University historian Albert L. Kohlmeier urged him to hasten the completion of his doctorate, Don and his family moved to Bloomington again. At IU, he was influenced by a generation of noted historians of Indiana, including Kohlmeier, John Barnhart, R.C. Buley, and Logan Esarey. From his experience studying with them, as he later remarked, he came to consider "[t]he pioneer era [to be] my area of principal interest." He received his Ph.D. in history in 1941.

Although Don often credited colleagues, such as Esarey, Buley, Kohlmeier, and Barnhart, for placing emphasis on Indiana history, his own role in the development of the discipline is perhaps most significant. During his teaching career, which continued through his retirement in 1980, Don loved to teach eager students about his home state. Recognizing the passion in their instructor, those students in turn became enthralled with Indiana history, and with the pioneer era in particular. He referred to persons of historic interest in Indiana by their last names only, like old friends: William Henry Harrison became simply "Harrison," Wendell Willkie just "Willkie." Don personalized history, and in the process touched the lives of thousands of college students, many of whom have now become teachers themselves.
As an instructor, Don was not only passionate but also factually precise; and he demanded the same from his students. He required his students to do "proper research": to know the issues, to evaluate the evidence carefully, and to formulate new ideas in a scholarly fashion. He taught them first to locate the facts, and then to use those facts to formulate new ideas and opinions regarding their historical material. I still have the paper I once submitted to him on the pioneer era Hoosier Samuel Judah. Its twenty-three pages are pockmarked with Don's green ink and extensive notes. At the end of the paper, Don questions, "What were your principal findings and conclusions?" Don, never wanting to waste time, was to the point.

A love of history, a passion for teaching, integrity, honor, goal-setting and achievement—these traits were integral parts of Don Carmony. They made him the kind of teacher I feel privileged to have encountered, the kind of teacher we all want for our kids today. From Don, I learned to learn and to love learning for nothing more than its own sake. From him, I developed a desire to read and an insatiable curiosity. When he shared his vast knowledge of our state's past with his students, we all took giant steps in understanding history's relevance to the world today.

I am humbled to have known this great man—as a teacher, a leader, a mentor, and a good friend. Donald Carmony was always gracious, always the perfect gentleman. I truly miss him.

EDUCATIONAL LEADER
By Stephen C. Moberly

I was a history major at Indiana University in the 1960s when I enrolled in Donald Carmony's Indiana history classes. The classes met at 8:30 a.m., a tough time slot for a night-owl like me, but I was always there. Don came from eastern Shelby County, as did my mother, who grew up in nearby Rays Crossing. Because of our Shelby County ties, I felt we had a special bond.

Like me, most people who recall Don Carmony think of him in his role as a professor of history on the Bloomington campus, where he taught for 25 of the 41 years he spent teaching for Indiana University. Yet prior to his Bloomington years, he played a major role in the university's growth, helping to develop what we used to call the IU Extension Centers, and now know as the IU regional campuses. Beginning in 1939, Carmony taught at the Extension Centers in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, and South Bend-Mishawaka. University administrators, impressed with his work, named him director of the South Bend center and then, in 1950, invited him to come to Bloomington as associate dean for Academic Programs and Policies.
in the Extension Centers. In that role, he advocated for increased academic standards and enhanced programs across the state.

Carmony's decision to resign the associate dean position after several years in Bloomington caused dismay at Bryan Hall. IU President Herman B Wells summoned Carmony to his office and asked him for any suggestions as to changes that might convince him to stay on. Carmony, in a display of Shelby County shrewdness, resolved not to "bid against himself," telling Wells, "I have none, but perhaps you will have some." Wells considered the matter, then offered his dean a more independent status (Don would henceforth report only to Dr. Herman T. Briscoe, the dean of Faculties), as well as tenure in the history department and an increase in salary. Carmony accepted the offer, continuing on as associate dean until 1959 and continuing his work of strengthening academic standards and offerings at the extension centers.

Even after he left the associate dean's post, Carmony served IU and the state in numerous administrative positions. He chaired the IU Committee on Historic Preservation as well as the state's sesquicentennial commission. He was instrumental in making improvements to the Indiana State Museum. While he said, throughout his life, that he preferred "teaching, writing, research and editing," Donald Carmony's service to the university and the state remain among the most significant aspects of legacy.

EDITOR
By Eric Sandweiss

Donald Carmony had been around the Hoosier block by the time he took up the editorship of the Indiana Magazine of History in 1955. This Shelbyville native—who delighted in evoking for later generations (including my own children, born more than eight decades after him) the life of a country boy, born in a cabin and educated in a one-room schoolhouse—had also helped to modernize higher education in Indiana.

The IMH of the 1950s was well-suited to Carmony's mix of down-to-earth know-how and worldly professionalism. Its earlier editors, men such as Carmony's adviser Logan Esarey, or the Frederick Jackson Turner protégé John Barnhart, had already fashioned the IMH into one of the best-known and respected of the many state history journals that appeared amid the rise of state and local history institutions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their opinions were strong ones; their terms long ones. William Lynch had held the editor's post for thirteen years; his successor, Barnhart, for fourteen.

Carmony took the journal's helm with a typical mix of modesty and willfulness. In his first message to his readers he turned to his predecessor, Barnhart, citing the elder scholar's inaugural editor's note from 1941:
"Various questions have been asked about the policies of the new editor," Carmony quoted Barnhart as saying. "The first policy will be that of learning how to edit the magazine as it has been edited. Consequently there will not be any important immediate changes nor any radical departures or thoughtless deviations from the past."

I have found few more succinct evocations than this of what James Madison subsequently labeled the "Indiana Way." Nor could I improve on Carmony's own words, later in the editor's note, for an example of the stubborn pride that also helps define that approach to the world: "Much," he wrote, "is currently being said and written about the need to understand the world in which we live. The historian can do this more effectively by studying the experiences of men through the centuries, and by reflecting upon what may be called the historical process, than by losing his perspective in a rootless absorption with so-called contemporary history."

Carmeny may have resisted "rootlessness" but he never feared change. His first issue included a retrospective of the IMH's 50-year history—a backward look that, while deserved and appropriate, proved only a temporary resting place. Twenty-one years, 84 issues, and three cover designs later, Don left the IMH—its longest-serving editor, before or since. In his decades at the journal, he had successfully combined an increasingly sophisticated mix of historical literature with a canny sense of the colorful features, local stories, and documents that the journal's diverse readership also valued. His last issue, in 1975, reflected in some measure his willingness to take chances and pursue new directions, even those that led far from his Shelbyville roots: the lead article that season focused on Alfred Kinsey's "31 Photographs" and their role in the development of American obscenity laws. (I should mention that Carmony discreetly selected for the Kinsey article's illustrations a photograph of the plain leather binding of a 19th-century edition of the banned works of the Marquis de Sade—rather than any examples of the more contemporary visual documentation available to him in the nearby Kinsey archives.)

In addition to being a bold and forward-thinking editor, Donald Carmony was also a shrewd developer of talent. Dozens of students learned the editor's craft as assistants under his tutelage, and one of them—Lorna Lutes Sylvester—rose to the ranks of Associate Editor (and, at key times, Acting Editor), helping to steer the IMH for thirty-four years before her retirement in 1999.

Such modesty was typical of Carmony. It makes particularly poignant to me a remembrance, written by him in 1968, of his elder colleague John Barnhart: "Although committed to his own high principles of scholarship and character," Carmony wrote, "he exercised understanding, kindness, generosity, and restraint in his evaluation of colleagues and students." Few among us deserve to write our own obituary. But Donald Carmony, with those words directed toward another, did so beautifully.